

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 were presented for examination in the present application. The instant amendment cancels claims 1, 8, 14-15, 19, and 24-25 without prejudice. Thus, claims 2-7, 9-13, 16-18, 20-23, and 26-32 are presented for consideration upon entry of the instant amendment.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 20, and 27-32.

Claim 6 was amended to include the elements of base claim 1. Claims 2-5 were amended to depend from claim 6. Claim 9 was amended to include the elements of base claims 1 and 8. Claim 17 was amended to include the elements of base claim 10. Claim 20 was amended to include the elements of base claims 10 and 19. Claims 27 and 31 were each amended to include the elements of base claim 21. Thus, claims 2-7, 9, 17-18, 20, and 27-32 are in condition for issuance.

Claims 1-5, 8, 10-16, 19, and 21-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,389,683 to Gannoe (Gannoe). Claims 1-5, 10-16, and 21-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Japanese Publication JPN 02-46971A to Kobayashi (Kobayashi).

Independent claim 10 has been amended to include elements of original claim 15, which has been cancelled. Claim 16 has been amended to depend from claim 10 and not cancelled claim 15.

As such, independent claim 10 now recites that “one lead of said pair of leads being in electrical communication with said solid solder wire so that said pair of leads electrically communicating with one another through said molten solder and said solid wire when said molten solder fills said reservoir to a triggering level (emphasis added).”

Gannoe discloses electrodes 108, 110 that function as a switch when both are in electrical communication with the molten solder in the molten solder reservoir 78 as shown in FIG. 5. See col. 3, lines 67-72.

Similarly, Kobayashi as best seen in FIG. 1 discloses electrode rods having bottom ends 4a, 5a that are both in electrical communication with the molten solder in the solder tank 1.

It is respectfully submitted that neither of the electrodes of Gannoe and/or Kobayashi is in electrical communication with the solid solder wire as recited by amended claim 10. Accordingly, claim 10 is not disclosed or suggested by Gannoe and/or Kobayashi.

Claim 10, as well as claims 11-13 and 16 that depend therefrom, are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 10-13 and 16 are respectfully requested.

Independent claim 21 has been amended to include elements of original claim 25, which has been cancelled. Claim 26 has been amended to depend from claim 21 and not cancelled claim 25.

As such, claim 21 now recites the step of "positioning said second lead in electrical communication with the solid solder wire so that said first lead electrically communicates with said second lead through the molten solder and the solid solder wire when said level is at said triggering level".

Again, both of the electrodes of Gannoe and/or Kobayashi are in electrical communication with the molten solder wire and, not, the solid solder wire as recited by amended claim 21. Accordingly, claim 21 is not disclosed or suggested by Gannoe and/or Kobayashi.

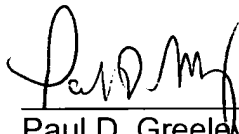
Claim 21, as well as claims 22-23 and 26 that depend therefrom, are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection to claims 21-23 and 26 are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Such action is solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants' attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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